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(54) Title: **IMPROVED INVESTMENT CASTING PROCESS**

(57) Abstract: The invention relates to a process for the production of a shell mould, comprising the sequential steps of: (i) dipping a preformed expendable pattern into a slurry of refractory particles and colloidal liquid binder whereby to form a coating layer on said pattern, (ii) depositing particles of refractory material onto said coating, and (iii) drying, steps (i) to (iii) being repeated as often as required to produce a shell mould having the required number of coating layers, characterised in that during at least one performance of step (ii) the particles of refractory material have been premixed with a gel-forming material whereby to coat at least a portion of said refractory particles with said gel forming material such that after contact with the coating layer moisture is absorbed by the gel-forming material thereby causing gellation of the colloidal binder so reducing the time required for drying in step (iii).

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WO 2005/075130 A1

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